

## Message Text

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43

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ITFE-05 VO-03 SCA-01 DHA-02 ORM-01 IO-10

AID-05 FDRE-00 PER-01 DODE-00 /039 W

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P R 031209Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6990

INFO CINCPAC HONOLULU

CINCPAC REP GUAM

SECDEF

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF, TH

SUBJECT: EMBASSY REFUGEE OPERATIONS - REQUEST FOR TDY OFFICERS FOR  
BANGKOK AND UTAPAO

REF: STATE 133652

SUMMARY: EMBASSY PROPOSES THAT FOUR TDY OFFICERS BE ASSIGNED TO BANGKOK TO TAKE OVER REFUGEE OPERATIONS. THREE OF THESE WOULD BE ASSIGNED IN BANGKOK TO INTERVIEW AND PROCESS REFUGEES AND TO KEEP IN CONTACT WITH THE RTG, UNHCR, AND VOLAGS. THE FOURTH OFFICER WOULD SPEND MOST OF HIS TIME AT THE UTAPAO REFUGEE CAMP, WHICH WE WILL CONTINUE TO USE. END SUMMARY.

1. FOR THE PAST THREE MONTHS, THAILAND HAS BEEN RECEIVING LARGE NUMBERS OF REFUGEES FROM CAMBODIA, VIETNAM AND LAOS. OUR EMBASSY HAS BEEN CLOSELY INVOLVED WITH THE REFUGEE PROBLEM SINCE MOST OF THE REFUGEES ARE FORMER FRIENDS AND ASSOCIATES WHO WANT TO GO TO THE UNITED STATES. WE HAVE MOVED 4,000 VIETNAMESE THROUGH UTAPAO WITHIN THE FIRST 48 HOURS AFTER THE FALL OF SAIGON AND SOME 2,400 CAMBODIANS WITHIN THE LAST THREE MONTHS. WE ARE NOW PROCESSING A GROUP OF 1,000 - 1,500 VIETNAMESE AND CAMBODIANS WHO QUALIFY UNDER THE MOST RECENT PAROLE AUTHORITY (REFTEL).

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2. A SPECIAL REFUGEE OPERATIONS TEAM HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED IN THE EMBASSY TO INTERVIEW AND PROCESS REFUGEES, MAINTAIN LIAISON WITH THE ROYAL THAI GOVERNMENT (RTG), UNHCR, VOLAGS AND COORDINATE ACTIVITIES WITH OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE MISSION. FOUR OFFICERS TEMPORARILY REMOVED FROM THE POLITICAL, POLITICAL/MILITARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE SECTIONS ARE CURRENTLY WORKING FULL TIME ON REFUGEE AFFAIRS. OFFICERS FROM OTHER SECTIONS OF THE EMBASSY HAVE BEEN INVOLVED OFF AND ON FOR THE LAST THREE MONTHS. IF WE ARE TO RESUME OUR NORMAL EMBASSY FUNCTIONS, WE CAN NO LONGER KEEP THESE OFFICERS AWAY FROM THEIR REGULAR JOBS. WE CANNOT ACCURATELY PREDICT HOW MUCH LONGER THE PROBLEM WILL BE WITH THAILAND, ALTHOUGH SOME VOLAGS TALK IN TERMS OF PERHAPS A YEAR. IT IS CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT WE WILL CONTINUE TO NEED PERSONNEL DEVOTING FULL TIME TO REFUGEE WORK FOR AT LEAST ANOTHER TWO MONTHS AND PROBABLY LONGER. WE PROPOSE, THEREFORE, THAT FOUR OFFICERS BE ASSIGNED TEMPORARILY TO BANGKOK TO HANDLE THE REFUGEE OPERATION FOR THE DURATION OF OUR INVOLVEMENT.

3. THE FOUR SHOULD INCLUDE VIETNAMESE, CAMBODIAN AND LAO LANGUAGE OFFICERS IF POSSIBLE. IT WOULD ALSO BE HELPFUL IF AT LEAST ONE WERE A PROFESSIONAL CONSULAR OFFICER. ONE CANDIDATE WHO MIGHT BE AVAILABLE IS HUGH O'NEILL, A VIETNAMESE LANGUAGE OFFICER PRESENTLY ASSIGNED TO GUAM. WE UNDERSTAND HE WILL SHORTLY BE TERMINATING HIS SERVICES THERE.

4. THREE OF THE OFFICERS WILL BE WORKING PRIMARILY IN BANGKOK. THE FOURTH WILL SERVE AS EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVE WITH OUR MILITARY IN THE JCRC ADMINISTERED REFUGEE CAMP AT UTAPAO. THIS CAMP SERVES AS AN INDISPENSABLE PART OF OUR OPERATION WHICH WE WILL CONTINUE TO USE. UTAPAO IS AN ACCEPTABLE LOCATION FOR THE RTG WHICH IS RELUCTANT TO RELEASE REFUGEES FROM ITS OWN CAMPS UNLESS THEY ARE CONVINCED THEY WILL BE HELD IN A SECURE AREA BEFORE DEPARTURE. IT IS ALSO CLOSE TO SEVERAL OF THE MAJOR THAI REFUGEE CAMPS AND QUALIFIED REFUGEES CAN BE MOVED EASILY INTO UTAPAO. ICEM, WHICH WILL BE MORE INVOLVED IN MOVEMENT OF REFUGEES IN THE FUTURE, ALSO AGREES THAT UTAPAO SHOULD BE CONTINUED AS A PROCESSING AND STAGING AREA. WITHOUT CONTINUED USE OF UTAPAO, OUR REQUIREMENTS FOR TDY PERSONNEL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WOULD BE CONSIDERABLY HIGHER.  
WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** REFUGEES, PAROLE, REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT, PERSONNEL ASSIGNMENTS  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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